

## SAFE EATING GUIDELINES

### FISH CONSUMPTION FROM LAKE MENDOCINO

Fish are nutritious and should be part of a healthy, balanced diet. It is important, however, to choose your fish wisely. The American Heart Association recommends healthy adults eat at least two meals of fish a week. OEHHA recommends that you choose fish to eat that are lower in mercury. Because some types of fish from Lake Mendocino contain high levels of mercury, OEHHA provides the recommendations below that you can follow to reduce the risks from exposure to methylmercury in fish.



**Women of childbearing age, pregnant or breastfeeding women,  
and children 17 years and younger**

<b>EAT IN MODERATION</b> No more than 1 meal a week
Sunfish or crappie
<b>AVOID</b> No more than 1 meal a month
Largemouth or smallmouth bass



**Women beyond childbearing age and men**

<b>BEST CHOICES</b> Up to 2 meals a week
Sunfish or crappie
<b>EAT IN MODERATION</b> No more than 1 meal a week
Largemouth or smallmouth bass

- Incomplete information from Lake Mendocino indicates that you should avoid eating striped bass, and channel catfish should be eaten in limited amounts (no more than 1 meal a week).
- **CONTACT WITH THE WATER IS SAFE.**
- **EAT SMALLER FISH OF LEGAL SIZE.** Fish build up mercury in their bodies as they grow.
- **MEAL SIZE DEPENDS ON BODY WEIGHT.** Meals are based on a 160-pound adult eating 8 ounces of fish (6 ounces after cooking) — about the size of two decks of cards. If you weigh less than 160 pounds, eat smaller portions of fish. Serve smaller meals to children.
- **DO NOT COMBINE FISH CONSUMPTION ADVICE.** Do not eat more than one of the listed fish species during the same time period unless you are eating from the Best Choices (green) category. If you eat fish from one place, following the advisory, avoid eating fish from other sources during the same time period.
- **CONSIDER THE FISH YOU BUY FROM STORES AND RESTAURANTS.** Women of childbearing age and children can safely eat up to 2 meals a week of most fish purchased in a store or restaurant, **OR** use this guide for eating fish caught from this water body. In a week when you eat 2 meals of fish purchased from stores or restaurants, avoid eating fish caught from a local water body. Commercial fish such as shrimp, king crab, scallops, farmed catfish, wild ocean salmon, oysters, tilapia, flounder, and sole generally contain some of the lowest levels of mercury. Women of childbearing age and children should not eat shark or swordfish, which contain the most mercury.
- **FISH FROM OTHER WATER BODIES MAY ALSO CONTAIN MERCURY.** Not all water bodies in California have been tested. With the exception of ocean or river-run salmon or steelhead, which may be consumed more frequently, fish caught from places without an advisory should be eaten in limited amounts.